

AN
E L E G Y

ON THE
D E A T H

OF

The Reverend Mr. JOHN RYLAND, M. A.
OF NORTHAMPTON,

WHO DIED AT ENFIELD, ON JULY 24, 1792, IN THE
SIXTY-NINTH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

By LEGATUS.

"THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL BE IN EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE." PSALM CXII. 6.

L O N D O N :

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TO

ALL THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES OF EUROPE, &c.

THE FOLLOWING

P O E M,

(DESIGNED MORE TO INSTRUCT AND COMFORT THE LIVING,
THAN TO COMPLIMENT THE DECEASED,)

IS,

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT,

INSCRIBED BY

THEIR SINCERE FRIEND

AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

AN
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D E A T H

O F

The Reverend JOHN RYLAND, M. A.

FROM this dim orb shall RYLAND's soul take flight,
In perfect day on Zion's heights alight!
Leave here his friends, where sorrows never cease,
And join the happy in the land of peace.
And shall Britannia feel so great a loss,
A soul full-fraught with blessings from the cross;
A tongue celestial, to proclaim the same
In strains as ardent as an angel's flame;
And gifts divine t' adorn the printed page,
With truths t' enlighten and enrich an age?

Shall England hence no more this glory boast,
 Which was her joy while he upon her coast
 Imported riches from the climes of day,
 Then to the churches made a bright display
 Of that true wealth which Indian stores outshines,
 And found alone in heav'n's exhaustless mines,
 To bless the poor, the perishing, and raise
 To Zion's King a revenue of praise?
 Shall such a wound be felt on English ground,
 And no soft voice 'mong Isr'el's thousands found
 To check the tears o'er Zion's face which flow?—
 Spirit Divine—from those pure coals which glow
 On yon blest altar high, bring thou a spark
 To one who mourns and muses in the dark,
 And with it touch these artless lips which move,
 And mean a tribute to eternal love.

Glory to Him who gave the living word,
 And faithful men, appointed to record
 The sacred truth, and zealously make known
 The saving blessings of Jehovah's throne!
 He rules his church with a pacific hand,
 And sends ambassadors to ev'ry land

To publish mercy to the fallen race,
 And loud proclaim the riches of his grace.
 These in their stations watchful, joyful stand
 A while to labour by Divine command;
 Call the far wand'ring home, and seek the lost,
 Establish those by various doctrines tost;
 Heal the diseas'd, and comfort those that weep,
 Drive wolves away, who grieve the guileless sheep;
 Instruct the simple, bind the broken heart,
 To hungry souls the heav'nly bread impart;
 The thirsty pilgrims to that river bring
 Where grows life's tree, 'midst whose green branches sing
 The blessed few whose fears and doubts are fled,
 To Nebo's top of full assurance led:
 In Canaan's view they daily waiting stay
 With patient hope, till summon'd from their clay;
 Gladly they follow—pass dark Jordan's ford,
 A better land inherit with their Lord;
 Join kindred spirits round the royal throne,
 And to Jehovah give the praise alone:
 According angels pour their notes along,
 And ardent seraphs help to swell the song.

Redemption's wise, august, amazing plan,
 In upper worlds shall be the theme of man;

And pow'rs celestial, who from peace ne'er fell,
 Shall with the saints unite, and joyful tell
 The honours due to Him who liv'd and dy'd
 Beneath these skies, to rescue man, then guide
 His footsteps in the ways of peace, and bring
 Through seas of wo the ransom'd home to sing
 Incessant praises for their blest release,
 And live for ever with the Prince of Peace.

In that bright world the attributes divine
 To all the wond'ring hosts shall ever shine
 In lustre such as man cannot conceive
 While he is destin'd on this earth to live.
 Redemption's work! O now survey it through!
 Brings God's perfections all to glorious view;
 And shews them in their brightest, mildest rays,
 Through Jesu's person in the Godhead blaze.
 When worlds were made these were but dimly seen;
 When angels sang at the creating scene,
 Few then appear'd save Pow'r and Wisdom. All
 On Calvary shone forth when from the fall
 Man was redeem'd: and ere the world began,
 They held a council for the peace of man.

Ere time was born, or aught save God had life,
 All his perfections on my peace were rife.
 In Eden, when primeval blifs was gone,
 His attributes in light pacific fhone:
 The great Redeemer, in an angel's form,
 Came not with vengeance and the voice of ftorm,
 Except to Satan—when to man he fpoke,
 Who the condition of his life had broke,
 All calm: 'twas mercy, righteoufnefs, and peace,
 Ran through the promise of his fure release;
 And fince that day, his attributes auguft
 Have fmil'd on earth, and doted on this duft.
 Call'd man, while fallen angels feel in hell
 How fore on fin eternal wrath can dwell.
 Man is his darling; man fhall live to fhew
 In endless day what grateful ardours glow
 In his glad bofom for redeeming love,
 And found hofannah through the worlds above.

In thofe pure fcenes of permanent delight
 What glories fhine to-day in RYLAND's fight?
 Jehovah's fov'reign *Will* and *Justice* blaze,
 With meek-ey'd *Truth*, to his great foul's amaze.

Goodness and *Wisdom* mix their beams benign,
 With those blest attributes, *Love*, *Mercy*, shine;
 While soft *Compassion*, *Majesty*, and *Grace*,
 Appear illustrious in his lovely face;
Immutability, *Omniscience*, shew
 Their lustre there. Ah, me! who can below
 On this great subject speak? *Long suffering*, *Joy*,
Omnipotence, his wond'ring thoughts employ;
 Fair *Holiness* and *Omnipresence* bright,
 And *Blessedness*, are seen in fullest light:
Peace, *Faithfulness*, *Eternal Life*! All shine
 In sweetest harmony, and all combine
 To shed full bliss above in heav'nly spheres,
 On RYLAND's soul, and all his blest compeers.
 There, in Redemption's deep mysterious plan,
 Smiles ev'ry attribute in love to man.
 Our friends releas'd by death, triumphant sing,
 With seraphs bright, to Zion's beauteous King;
 In spotless robes, in perfect glory, all
 Around His throne in radiant orders fall.
 To weep no more, or sigh, but ever praise
 The God of love in grateful sweetest lays,
 My spirit longs to quit her house of clay,
 And thither soar to be as blest as they.

Such truths on earth did he with fervor preach,
 And from the pulpit and the press did teach
 The great salvation thro' atoning blood—
 The careless world, like them before the flood,
 Despis'd his theme as Noah's was despis'd;
 And all the riches which the Lamb demis'd,
 And freely publish'd to the needy poor,
 To all who seeking, come to mercy's door,
 Although with heav'nly eloquence adorn'd,
 By wicked wits were ridicul'd and scorn'd;
 And graver moralists pass'd smiling by,
 Gross folly call'd the wisdom of the sky.
 So did the Jew well-nigh Jerus'lem's gate
 Pass by the cross; his bosom full of hate;
 Blasphem'd the Suff'rer, laugh'd that King to scorn,
 To honour whom angels and men were born.
 So too the self-conceited hoary Greek,
 When Paul of Jesus and his love did speak,
 Pronounc'd his wisdom foolish and absurd,
 Vow'd he'd be lost ere he'd believe a word.
 Perish they did, the ancient Greek and Jew:
 In hell there's also room enough for you,
 Ye modern deists; RYLAND told you so,
 And prov'd that thither you at death must go,

If then despisers of the sacred page,
 Which shews to blooming youth and with'ring age
 True wisdom's plan, the Saviour on the cross,
 Procuring more than earthly Adam's loss;
 To law and justice giving their full due,
 While old creation trembled at the view;
 The sun abash'd, his chariot backward wheel'd,
 And Satan also like a drunkard reel'd
 In hell; and tumbled off his ebon throne,
 Muttering out with a malignant groan,
 Such as Vesuvius when her bowels roar
 To pour their vengeance on the distant shore—
 " My empire's lost, the vict'ry now was won
 " On Calv'ry's hill by the eternal Son."
 Death, likewise vanquish'd, fell by Satan's side;
 Sin too was sentenc'd, when the Surety dy'd,
 And doom'd to perish from the soul who cries
 For life, and to the cross believing flies.
 Well pleas'd, the Father bow'd the awful heav'n,
 Beheld the Lamb and the dispers'd eleven;
 The pious women weeping nigh the grave
 Of him who dy'd so signally to save;
 Tore down the temple's vail, and seem'd to say,
 " Let types no more stand in my people's way;

Let shadows flee, and ceremonies die,
 And on the antitype let ev'ry eye
 Be fix'd; in him see grace and glory shine,
 Apply to him for righteousness divine;
 Rest on his death for pardon, peace, and life,
 For every comfort in this world of strife;
 Live on his fulness, he shall soon arise,
 The deed is done—he's welcome to the skies."
 Bright angels, wond'ring round the throne above,
 Gaz'd at the scene, and bless'd eternal love;
 Some flew and hover'd round the fatal tree
 Where Jesus pray'd, and bled, and dy'd for me:
 Two at the sepulchre, in twilight grey,
 Heav'd off, and roll'd the pond'rous stone away.
 The Lord reviv'd, rose from the realms of death,
 And left for ever foil'd his foes beneath:
 Gave holy orders to his chosen few,
 Then in full triumph to his father flew;
 Sent from his throne the spirit of all grace,
 The pride of worldly wisdom to disgrace.

As taught by him, the meek disciples ran
 To publish life and peace to wretched man.

Heav'n own'd their message, though the style was plain:
 The purport this—"The righteous Jesus slain,
 And, risen, now is in the holy place,
 There interceding, gives abundant grace
 To guilty men. Whoever will, shall have
 The gifts of life, and be no more a slave;
 Possess on earth a portion with the blest,
 And in the world to come, eternal rest."

Many believ'd the gracious record true,
 Gave up to Christ their souls and bodies too;
 Had peace with God, 'mong men liv'd joyful, meek,
 Like Abr'am did a better country seek;
 Whatever good by faith was sought, they found,
 Then caught to heav'n, where all good things abound:
 O'er Judah's plains, and o'er the Gentile land,
 The glorious truth did like a sun expand;
 It's mildest beams soon sought the British isle,
 And hitherto on us grace deigns to smile.

Thus Jesus open'd through his death the way
 From woes unnumber'd to the worlds of day,
 Where peace full flows, and bow'rs ambrosial bloom,
 Whence wisdom's voice descends, and cries, "There's room;

Why will ye perish? All is ready; look
 Unto the Saviour, search the sacred book:
 'Tis written there, th' atoning work is done;
 Let kings and queens approach, embrace the Son."
 Grace calls the mean and honourable man
 To Jesus: haste, your life is but a span.
 O come, the rich and poor, the old and young,
 Hear soft Compassion's sweet, pathetic tongue:
 All heav'n invites; bless'd saints and angels say,
 "Flee now from wrath, this is Salvation's day."
 The call is free; the most unworthy souls,
 Of deepest crimes, between the distant poles,
 Have been redeemed, wash'd, and white array'd;
 Nor need the foulest ever be afraid,
 Who comes for cleansing to Salvation's fount,
 And pleads for mercy on the Lamb's account.
 Of Gospel calls, this is the gracious sum,
 "Whoever thirsts, whoever will, may come."

None are rejected of the ruin'd race,
 Nor has one perish'd in the hand of Grace.
 Those who refuse the call prefer the road
 Which leads from truth, and from the throne of God;

Trust in their merits, and despise the Lamb;
 Follow their lusts, and glory in their shame.
 Alas! what glooms incumbent o'er their path,
 Which leads to death, and to the day of wrath!
 O stop a while, ye thoughtless, harden'd men!
 Regard the warnings of my weeping pen:
 Hark! your kind moments whispering as they fly,
 "O man, be wise! for thou must shortly die."
 And after dying, whither shalt thou go?
 To joys eternal, or to endless woe;
 Exult with Jesus in consummate bliss,
 Or groan with devils in the deep abyss.
 Wake from thy lethargy, and see the end,
 The grand result of things! Hast thou a friend
 To screen thy person in the judgment day,
 When worlds in broken fragments fall away?
 No time to lose, no not a moment; seek
 An early interest in the willing, meek
 Redeemer.—All things hasten to a close,
 No longer fold thine arms in guilt's repose.
 From old eternity an angel flies;
 See him alight beneath these blushing skies,
 In awful majesty and justice stand,
 One foot on sea, the other on the land;

And hear him swear, as if all thunders roar,
 By heav'n's Supreme, that "time shall be no more."
 What then must follow, but the day of doom,
 The founding trumpet, and the bursting tomb;
 The rising dead, Jehovah drawing nigh,
 And bold presumption in his presence die?
 On his white throne behold the Judge serene;
 See all the nations at his bar convene;
 The flames consuming, like an useless scroll,
 The tatter'd skies! and worlds, from pole to pole,
 Fallen a sacrifice to vengeful fire,
 And in one blaze the universe expire!
 Vain Pharisee, where now thy specious boast
 Of moral rectitude, and hope!—What, lost?
 Proud Deist, now I'll give thee leave to smile
 At holy writ—and call it priestly guile.
 Now, Atheist, say, is there a holy God?
 Own his supremacy, and feel his rod.

O thou refuge of my trembling, anxious soul!
 This hour, in death, and on that day, my whole
 Dependance rests, well pleas'd alone on thee;
 Thy blood, when nature dies, shall plead for me.
 Since the dear day when thou didst own me thine,
 My heart has felt a confidence divine:

Thou art my wisdom, righteousness, and guide,
 No fear I have while walking by thy side.
 My life below, my journey's end, my rest;
 Thy name shall be my song among the blest.

O rouse, Britannia! walk while thou hast light,
 Lest injur'd truth should flee, and tenfold night,
 As once on Egypt, o'er thine island spread,
 And thou be reckon'd as among the dead:
 Thy fair deserted holy temples throng,
 There raise the fervent prayer and grateful song;
 Regard the Being who has given birth
 To thee, and all the nations of the earth;
 Revere his messengers, who publish peace
 'Tween God and man, and pray for their increase;
 Embrace thy Lord, who spreads his saving hand,
 In sovereign mercy, o'er thy sinful land:
 No more let avarice in thy borders dwell;
 Let not thy wealthy merchants buy and sell,
 And torture human souls, whose powers prove,
 Though in complexion differing, they can move
 In paths of science and religious ways.
 Were they to live beneath the fostering rays
 Of bright philosophy and heav'nly truth,
 Their sons would equal thy well tutor'd youth.

Cease then to tarnish the fair Christian name
 With traffic such as spreads o'er earth thy shame:
 To distant isles send messengers of grace,
 And loudly sound to all the human race
 The Gospel trump, proclaim the jubile year;
 Bid the wide world to Jesu's throne draw near:
 Let pride and drunkenness no more deface
 Thy noble sons! May whoredom thee disgrace
 No longer! Hence, let blasphemy and lust,
 With all thy vice, be buried in the dust,
 No more to rise!—And thou, a virgin pure,
 In paths of virtue to the end endure.
 When thus reform'd, beneath thy Shepherd's care,
 In ev'ry good thou cheerfully shalt share;
 In vain thy foes shall wish thine overthrow,
 Thy daily peace shall like a river flow.

The solemn doctrines I do thus rehearse
 Inspir'd the Subject of this sacred verse:
 He taught them wisely; with a seraph's zeal,
 His language utter'd what his heart did feel;
 And, though Northampton now his bones enshrines,
 His soul shall speak in these elegiac lines.

Zion, review the verse ; no longer mourn :
 Behold, Elijah like, to heav'n upborne,
 Thy shining, burning, useful lights ascend !
 Their flight reminds thee of thy happy end ;
 They shew the path which leads thee home to God,
 To raise thy cold affections from this clod
 Of earth.—With hope divine, thy sons t' inspire,
 O may thy teachers catch their sacred fire !
 See *Whitfield, Rowland, Evans, Ryland*—these
 Are fled !—like berries on the olive trees :
 Yet on the topmost boughs some few remain ;
De Courcy, Francis, Rippon, Eyre, Romaine,
Newton, and Cecil, Clayton, David Jones ;
 These are not drowsy, idle, useless drones,
 But all laborious in the Christian field ;
 Feed well the sheep, and Truth's bright sword they wield
 Against the foe ; bid Error skulk away,
 And watch their flocks lest any go astray.
 More I could name, but these seem, 'bove the rest
 Of those whom *I have heard*, most richly blest
 With useful gifts and eloquence divine,
 And in their spheres like brilliant stars they shine.
 Yes, hundreds more I love and honour too,
 And at their feet would sit to hear them woo.

Poor wretched souls to the Redeemer's throne;
 The trembling call to that foundation stone;
 With grace establish every serious mind,
 And him exalt, the Saviour of mankind.
 May I, though least, yet happy in my place,
 All means and opportunities embrace
 To comfort those who wait the heav'nly calls
 Of truth, within glad *Salem's* hallow'd walls.

Lord of the vineyard, hear our cries, and send
 Forth faithful lab'ers till the harvest end;
 O'er all the prophets' schools do thou preside;
 May party names, and bigotry subside,
 And truth prevail till error be abash'd;
 Our Levites all in holy water wash'd:
 Thus send them out, in heart and int'rest one,
 Deriving light from thee, illustrious Sun;
 Place them in *Zion* o'er thy purchas'd sheep,
 Give such, dear Lord, to flocks who daily weep
 For lack of pastors; soon their place supply,
 Whom thou hast raised to thy throne on high.

Thou ever liv'st; though ministers be dead,
 The church is thine, thy people shall be fed;

All glory to thy name, the world shall know
 That thou art God—The globe shall overflow
 With blessings from thy lib'ral faithful hand,
 Thy messengers shall fly through ev'ry land;
 Darkness and tyranny shall be no more,
 But truth and joy shall spread from shore to shore;
 Blind superstition shall to hell be driv'n,
 This world commence a temporary heav'n.

A thousand years Emanuel shall reign,
 And on this earth a paradise regain;
 All kings and queens shall lovely Shilo greet,
 And cast their crowns and sceptres at his feet.
 Though not in person, He shall reign with men,
 Till ev'ry page of the prophetic pen
 Shall be fulfill'd, in peace, from pole to pole;
 Thus gather in the travail of his soul:
 Shall Satan, sin, and death, with ev'ry woe,
 Sentence to lie in endless shades below;
 Then take to heav'n his spotless lovely bride,
 Who with her Lord for ever shall abide;
 Adore his person, praise his matchless love,
 Completely happy in the realms above.

THE END.